

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 RANGOO 03168 01 OF 02 051116Z

20

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 SAJ-01 SAB-01 EB-07 AID-05

COME-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 AGR-05 SNM-02 DEAE-00 JUSE-00

OES-03 /115 W

----- 007722

R 150905Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 542

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK BY POUCH

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU BY POUCH

AMCONSUL MANDALAY BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI BY POUCH

USLO PEKING BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY SEOUL BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY PARIS BY POUCH

AMCONSUL UDORN BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RANGOON 3168

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, BM

SUBJECT: JOINT WEEKA #42

1. KOREAN DEVELOPMENTS (LOU)

AS ANTICIPATED, BURMA ON OCTOBER 29 VOTED IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE UNGA IN FAVOR OF THE HOSTILE RESOLUTION ON KOREA AND ABSTAINED ON THE US SPONSORED RESOLUTION. GUB HAS YET TO OFFER REASONS FOR VOTE BUT JAPANESE, IRRITATED BY WHAT THEY CONSIDER

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PAGE 02 RANGOO 03168 01 OF 02 051116Z

"BAD FAITH" ON THE PART OF MFA OFFICIALS WHO PROMISED VOTE EX-

PLANATION BEFOREHAND, LINK SWITCH FROM TRADITIONAL POSTURE OF ABSTENTION ON THIS ISSUE TO BURMESE ASSESSMENT OF "NEW REALITIES" IN REGION. ASKED IF BURMESE VOTE MIGHT BE CONSIDERED A "PRESENT" TO CHINA IN VIEW OF NE WIN'S FORTHCOMING TRIP TO PEKING, PRC DIPLOMAT TOLD JAPANESE "WE WOULD LIKE TO THINK SO." IN A SOMEWHAT IRONIC NOTE, ROK'S FIRST AMBASSADOR TO BURMA JIA SANG AN PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO PRESIDENT NE WIN TWO DAYS BEFORE UN VOTE ON KOREAN RESOLUTIONS.

2. FRENCH ECONOMIC MISSION (LOU)

A FRENCH MISSION, HEADED BY SPECIAL ENVOY FRANCOIS MISSOFFE, ARRIVED RANGOON NOV. 2 FOR A 12 DAY VISIT. DESPITE FRENCH EMBASSY PROTESTATIONS THAT THE GROUP IS SIMPLY VISITING HERE EN ROUTE TO INDONESIA (THEY WILL TOUR PAGAN AND MANDALAY), GUB SOURCES CONTENT THAT FRENCH ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS THE POSSIBILITY OF PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED IBRD CONSORTIUM FOR BURMA.

3. RICE PROCUREMENT POLICY (LOU)

GUB HOPES TO PROCURE 150 MILLION BASKETS OF PADDY THIS CROP YEAR. LAST YEAR'S TARGET WAS 146 MILLION BASKETS AND ACTUAL COLLECTIONS AMOUNTED TO ABOUT 134 MILLION. PROCUREMENT PRICES REMAIN FOR SALES IN EXCESS OF QUOTA AS WAS CASE LAST YEAR.

COMMENT: ELIMINATION OF BONUS FOR EXCESS SALES AND FAILURE TO RAISE PROCUREMENT PRICE DESPITE HIGH RATE OF INFLATION OFFER FARMERS LESS INCENTIVE TO SELL PADDY TO GOVERNMENT THIS YEAR. AGRICULTURAL MINISTRY OFFICIALS CONTEND THIS WILL BE OFFSET BY ALLOWING FARMERS WHO EXCEED QUOTAS TO PURCHASE WIDE VARIETY OF CONSUMERGOODS AT CONTROLLED PRICES WHICH THEY CAN THEN RESELL ON BLACKMARKET. OFFICIAL EXPLANATION IS THAT HOLDING DOWN PROCUREMENT COSTS WILL REDUCE CONSUMER PRICE. HOWEVER, GUB MAY NOT ACTUALLY WISH TO MEET TARGETED PROCUREMENT FIGURE. LAST YEAR'S COLLECTION, THOUGH SHORT OF TARGET, WAS LARGE ENOUGH TO PUT SEVERE STRAIN ON GOVERNMENT'S STORAGE AND TRANSPORT FACILITIES, AND BURMA ALSO FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO EXPORT AT FAVORABLE PRICES. WITH BUMPER CROP EXPECTED THIS YEAR AND WITH FALLING PRICES IN WORLD MARKET, GUB DOES NOT EXPEC TO SELL SUFFICIENT QUANTITIES

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 RANGOO 03168 01 OF 02 051116Z

ABORAD AT HIGH ENOUGHT PRICES TO JUSTIFY COSTLY COLLECTION EFFORT. BURMA HAS LARGE RESERCE FROM LAST YEAR FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION, AND TO MAKE STORAGE FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR THIS YEAR'S CROP, GUB HAS EASED INFORCEMENT OF REGULATION PROHIBITING PRIVATE TRANSPORT OF RICE. AS RESULT, LARGE QUANTITIES NOW ENTERING RANGOON BLACKMARKET AND CONSUMER PRICE HAS DROPPED SIGNIFICANTLY IN PAST MONTH.

4. OIL DEVELOPMENTS (CONF)

MARTABAN-CITIES SERVICE IS PREPARING TO CLOSE OUT AND ABANDON ITS SECOND WELL AFTER HAVING TESTED GAS BEARING FORMATIONS ENCOUNTERED DURING DRILLING. ONE OF FORMATIONS YIELDED AN OPEN FLOW OF 30 MILLION CUBIC FEET OF METHANE GAS PER DAY. THIS DEPOSIT, HOWEVER, NOT PRESENTLY COMMERCIALY EXPLOITABLE. JAPANESE-OWNED AODC PRESENTLY DRILLING AT 7400 FEET THROUGH MUD AND MUDSTONE AND IS HAVING TO DRILL SLOWLY BECAUSE OF SOFT FORMATIONS AND HIGH PRES-SURE.

5. WMO TO PROVIDE STORM WARNING RADAR FROM ARAKAN COAST (UNCL)

GUB AND UNDP OFFICIALS HAVE SIGNED PROJECT DOCUMENT FOR LARGE-SCALE STORM WARNING RADAR PROJECT ON ARAKAN COAST WITH WORLD METEO-ROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO) AS EXECUTING AGENCY. WHO EXPERTS HAVE LONG RECOMMENDED INSTALLATION OF RADAR STATION TO PROVIDE EARLY DETECTION AND TRACKING OF TROPICAL CYCLONES WHICH ARE COMMON TO THE AREA. PROJECT SCHEDULED TO BEGIN THIS MONTH WITH ARRIVAL OF RADAR ELECTRONICS EXPERT. TOTAL UNDP CONTRIBUTION IS \$400,400 AND GUB COUNTERPART CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTS TO K642,360 (\$104,000).

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 03168 02 OF 02 051204Z

12

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SNM-02 DEAE-00 JUSE-00

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SAJ-01 SAB-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 AGR-05

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 543

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMDABASSY KUALA LUMPUR 432

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK BY POUCH
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 RANGOON 3168

6. INSURGENCY: FIGHTING IN THE TENASSERIM PENINSULA (LOU)

EMBASSY NOTES PRESS PLAY GIVEN IN BANGKOK PAPERS OVER THE FIGHTING BETWEEN INSURGENT FACTIONS ALONG THE THAI-BURMA BORDER. THERE HAS BEEN NO COMMENT IN LOCAL PAPERS. BURMESE WHO HAVE VISITED THE AREA RECENTLY HAVE GIVEN NO SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THE FIGHTING. ESSENTIALLY, IT IS THE OLD U NU GROUP (NOW ACRONYMED PPP) AGAINST THE KARENS WITH WHO THERE HAD BEEN A LOOSE ALLIANCE. SINCE THE DEPARTURE OF U NU, THAT FACTION HAS BEEN FLOUNDERING AND OF NECESSITY MADE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE KARENS. SEVERAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 RANGOO 03168 02 OF 02 051204Z

OBSERVERS HAVE COMMENTED THAT THE KARENS DO ALL THE DIRTY WORK, I.E., SABOTAGE, HANDGRENADE THROWING, ETC., WHILE THE PPP TAKES THE CREDIT. ETHNIC PROBLEMS ALSO ENTER: BURMANS VS KARENS. BANGKOK MAY BE MORE ALARMED SINCE THE FIGHTING IS CLOSE TO HOME; RANGOON COULDN'T BE MORE PLEASED.

7. NARCOTICS (UNCLASSIFIED)

GUB POLICE MADE ARRESTS AND SEIZURES IN FOUR SEPARATE CITIES CURING THE WEEK. FIVE OFFENDERS WERE ARRESTED AND OVER K53,000 WORTH OF NARCOTICS WERE CONFISCATED, K3,000 WORTH OF NUMBER FOUR HEROIN IN RANGOON, AND K50,000 WORTH OF RAW OPIUM IN MOULMEIN. CONTINUING THE TREND SET IN RECENT WEEKS OF PUBLICIZING ANTI-DRUG OPERATIONS, NOVEMBER 3 PAPERS CARRIED ACCOUNTS OF MID-OCTOBER RAIDS ON KNOWN "GANJA" (MARIJUANA) PLANTATIONS IN THE PEGU YOMA AREA. ELEVEN ACRES, CONTAINING OVER 20,000 MARIJUANA PLANTS, WERE DESTROYED. THIS LATEST ACTION WAS A PART OF A LARGER OPERATION WHICH EARLIER NETTED 281 KILOGRAMS OF MARIJUANA SEIZED AND ADDITIONAL 35 ACRES OF MARIJUANA PLANTS DESTROYED.

8. PRESS CONTROLS TO BE TIGHTENED (CONF)

RECENT INCIDENT INVOLVING NOTED COLUMNIST AND POLITICAL FIGURE U THEIN PE MYING MAY INDICATE THAT FORMER AMBASSADOR TO US AND NEW MINISTER OF INFORMATION U LWIN WILL TIGHTEN CONTROLS OVER BURMESE PRESS. IN OCTOBER 23 NEWSPAPER COLUMN U THEIN PE MYINT UNFLATTER-

INGLY COMPARED PROPOSAL MADE DURING RECENT HLUTTAW (PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY) SESSION TO INCREASE ALLOWANCES OF BOTH MEMBERS AND PRESIDENT NE WIN TO LEVEL PAID IN BOTH COLONIAL TIMES AND PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY ERA. ARTICLE ALSO IMPLICITLY CRITICAL OF BLOATED GUB BUREAUCRACY. U LWIN, ENRAGED BY ARTICLE, REPORTEDLY ANNOUNCED THAT CHANGES WOULD BE MADE UNDER HIS ADMINISTRATION AND AT FIRST ORDERED (IT LATER PROVED IMPRACTICAL) THAT NO COMMENTARY COULD BE PRINTED WITHOUT HIS APPROVAL. U LWIN HAS REPORTEDLY CALLED MEETING OF MEDIA PERSONNEL FOR NOVEMBER 6 AT WHICH NEW GUIDELINES WILL BE LAID DOWN.

9. GUB NEWSPAPERS RAISE CIRCULATION (UNCLASSIFIED)

MINISTER OF INFORMATION ANNOUNCED AT HLUTTAW THAT THE GUB PLANNED TO RAISE NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION, EFFECTIVE NO. 1 TO FOLLOWING:
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 RANGOO 03168 02 OF 02 051204Z

WORKING PEOPLE DAILY (E)	FROM 15,000	TO 20,000
GUARDIAN (E)	15,000	15,000
WPD (B)/	X80,000	90,000/
MIRROR	80,000	90,000
NEW LIGHT OF BURMA	30,000	30,000
BOTATAUNG	75,000	72,000
HANTHAWADDY (MANDALAY)	15,000	18,500

OVERALL CIRCULATION HAS THUS BEEN INCREASED BY ABOUT 10 PERCENT TO 335,500. BOTATAUNG CIRCULATION SHOWS A SLIGHT DROP RELECTING LOWER POPULARITY.

10. GUB PLANS REORGANIZATION UNIVERSITY TRAINING (LOU)

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES WILL PROBABLY REOPEN IN JANUARY, 1976, WITH NEW PROCEDURES AND ORGANIZATION. THERE WILL BE NO HOSTEL OR BOARDING FACILITIES FOR STUDENTS AND RECENT SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATES WILL CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION IN A TWO-YEAR PROGRAM OF PRE-UNIVERSITY CLASSES TO BE CONDUCTED IN THE PRINCIPAL HIGH SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. THERE WILL BE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPECIALIZED OR TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN THE PRE-UNIVERSITY CLASSES SO THAT GRADUATES COULD QUALIFY FOR TECHNICAL JOBS WITHOUT GOINT ON TO FULL UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONAL TRAINING.

11. CULTURAL NOTES (UNCLASSIFIED)

BURMESE MEDIA GAVE HEAVY COVERAGE TO US-SPONSORED BOOK EXHIBIT AT AMERICAN CENTER AND LECTURE PROGRAM FOR SURGEONS AND PHYSICIANS BY FOUR AMERICAN CARDIOLOGISTS. A 25-MEMBER DANCE TROUPE LEFT FOR JAPAN TO PARTICIPATE IN TOKYO'S FESTIVAL OF ASIAN FOLK MUSIC AND DANCES. A 12-MEMBER CHINESE BADMINTON TEAM, WHICH HAD FIRST ARRIVED IN BURMA IN MID OCT. RETURNED FROM NEPAL TO GIVE THREE

ADDITIONAL EXHIBITION GAMES.

OSBORN

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